

Robert Frost's Winter Home For Sale

By Wayne Markham
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"The house had gone to bring
again.
"To the midnight sky a sunset
glow.

"Now the chimney was all of the
house that stood.
"Like a pistil after the petals go."

—Robert Frost from "The Need
of Being Versed in Country Things"

MIAMI—Robert Frost's winter
home, unlike the one depicted in his
verse, still stands in a sun-dappled
glade near South Miami.

Tuesday, the owners put the tiny
clapboard cottage up for sale.
The asking price: \$295,000.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph F. Havel of
Pawleys Island, S.C., decided to sell
Frost's former winter residence four
weeks after the Miami Metro Historic
Preservation Board voted to designate
the 40-year-old prefabricated home a
historic site. The designation means the
property, and a companion one on the
cottage, can't be altered without a cer-
tificate from the Historic Preservation
Board.

The Havels were not consulted be-
fore the board acted, according to their
real estate broker, Raymond G. Asmar.

Frost acquired the property in 1940,
a year after his wife, Elinor, died. The
four-time Pulitzer Prize winner cleared
away thick foliage by hand and planted
grapefruit, mango and loquat trees. He
called his winter hideaway Pencil Pines.

Frost spent every winter here be-
tween 1942 and his death in 1963 at
age 89. A caretaker lives in the com-
panion cottage next door.

Ironically, the thickly overgrown
property, replete with live oak trees,
fruit trees, a lily pond, bromeliads and
orchids, is worth more than his clap-
board cottage.

The Dade County property assess-
ment values the land at \$15,900. The
two cottages, each only 650 square feet,
are assessed at \$11,378. The Havels
purchased both cottages and 1.9 acres
of land in 1966 for \$27,500.

Asmar says the cottage once occu-
pied by Frost has been vacant for years.
There is no kitchen, "just a little fire-
place, a small living area, one bedroom
and a bath."

"It has to be the most unusual prop-
erty I've ever listed," says Asmar.